

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph at page 3, line 17, to page 4, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

It is important for the above-described type of image sensor unit to reliably provide the starting characteristic of the light source. Accordingly, it is proposed to create a localized area of the strong electric field effect to enhance the electric discharge efficiency, thereby securing continuous light emission across the entire range (see, for example, JPA 11-283579). It is also proposed to use an additional light source to irradiate the light emitting body in order to ionize and excite the gas filled in the light emitting body (see, for example, JPA 4-106896). Still another proposal is to mix a material that easily emits electrons in the fluorescent material used in the light emitting body, instead of irradiating the light emitting body (see, for example, JPA 2000-156203 and JPA 2001-123988). Yet another proposal is that a portion of the fluorescent layer be removed so as to allow initial electrons to emit from this removed portion for the purpose of starting ionization and excitation of the gas (see, for example, JPA 2001-102004). The emission of the initial electrons is compared to a "small flame" for sequentially causing ionization and excitation to achieve continuous electric discharge.

Please replace the paragraph at page 23, line 21, to page 24, line 8, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Second, the uncovered region, in which the light emitting layer is not formed, extends from an end of the electric discharge light emitting lamp continuously or discontinuously